

Chapter 3

The Selection Criteria

Public Law 101-510 requires the Secretary of Defense to develop and report to the Congress the criteria to be used in selecting bases for closure and realignment. In BRAC 95, the Department used the same criteria as in BRAC 91 and 93. As described below, those criteria give priority to military value, followed by return on investment and economic and other impacts on base communities.

This chapter presents the BRAC 95 criteria and important events and decisions from both past and present BRAC rounds that contributed to their development. On December 9, 1994, the Department of Defense published a notice in the Federal Register that identified the selection criteria to be used in BRAC 95.

Maintaining the Prior Selection Criteria for BRAC 95

The Department of Defense decided not to change the criteria for BRAC 95 after careful consideration of suggestions made over the past two rounds of closures by the public, Congress, General Accounting Office, the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission, and from within DoD. The Department's decision was based on two factors: 1) the criteria were broadly defined, which permitted adaptation through policy guidance to changing circumstances and differing types of activities; and 2) the criteria served well in the 1991 and 1993 efforts.

For BRAC 95, the Department reviewed and improved its process for considering economic impact, including the cumulative economic impact of prior BRAC actions. These improvements in procedures respond to issues raised by the 1993 Defense Base Closure Realignment Commission and the General Accounting Office. For BRAC 95, the Department considered cumulative economic impact as part of the sixth criterion, i.e., "the economic impact on communities." DoD considered economic impact and cumulative economic impact as relative measures when comparing alternatives. This process is discussed in detail in Chapter 4.

In deciding to use the previous selection criteria in BRAC 95, the Department also evaluated the issue of non-DoD costs. The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1994 directed DoD to consider whether the costs of BRAC actions to other Federal departments and agencies should be included in the selection criteria for the 1995 BRAC process. After conducting a thorough review of the issue, the Department decided against such a change. First, it would be impossible to obtain accurate estimates for such costs within the controlled procedures of the BRAC process. Furthermore, even where BRAC

actions could result in cost increases to other Federal departments and agencies, DoD found that these costs in most cases analyzed would amount to a small fraction of BRAC savings -- less than 2 percent -- and therefore would not be likely to alter BRAC decisions.

BRAC 95 Selection Criteria

In selecting military installations for closure or realignment, the Department of Defense, giving priority consideration to military value (the first four criteria below), will consider:

Military Value

1. The current and future mission requirements and the impact on operational readiness of the Department of Defense's total force.
2. The availability and condition of land, facilities and associated airspace at both the existing and potential receiving locations.
3. The ability to accommodate contingency, mobilization, and future total force requirements at both the existing and potential receiving locations.
4. The cost and manpower implications.

Return on Investment

5. The extent and timing of potential costs and savings, including the number of years, beginning with the date of completion of the closure or realignment, for the savings to exceed the costs.

Impacts

6. The economic impact on communities.
7. The ability of both the existing and potential receiving communities' infrastructure to support forces, missions and personnel.
8. The environmental impact.

Selection Criteria for Prior BRAC Rounds

The BRAC 88 selection criteria were developed jointly by the Department of Defense and the Congress, and were incorporated by reference into Public Law 100-526 (the Defense Authorization Amendments and Base Closure and Realignment Act). This law was a precursor to the current BRAC authority.

In BRAC 91, the Department proposed criteria, solicited public comments, transmitted the final selection criteria to the Congressional Defense Committees and subcommittees, and notified the public in the Federal Register of all these activities. DoD published the proposed selection criteria and request for comments in the November 30, 1990, issue of the Federal Register (55 FR 49678). The proposed criteria closely mirrored the criteria established by the 1988 Defense Secretary's Commission on Base Realignment and Closure (see Appendix E for a history of base closures). However, the proposed criteria differed in two ways from the 1988 criteria: 1) DoD would give priority consideration to military value, and 2) the return on investment "payback" period would not be limited to six years.

In BRAC 93, DoD published a notice in the December 15, 1992, issue of the Federal Register (57 FR 59334), stating that the selection criteria used in BRAC 91 would be used again, unchanged. DoD made this decision because the BRAC 91 final criteria were appropriately amended based on public comments, were accepted by Congress, and served well in the 1991 effort.

